

=THE BOOK OF ACTS=
Lesson 10
Cornelius and His House - Acts 10

AIM: to teach my pupils the meaning of the story of Cornelius and his conversion.

POINT OF CONTACT: Since Cornelius was a soldier, have some things pertaining to soldiers with you in the class—part of a soldier’s uniform, a soldier’s cap, some things that you (or your husband) had in the service. Pass them around and acquaint the class with them.

- I. CORNELIUS WAS A SOLDIER. See Acts 10:1. He was a centurion serving under Herod Agrippa, the representative of Roman power in that district. He was stationed at Cæsarea. Thus, he was a representative of Rome for the stopping of trouble and tumults if they should arise and for the keeping of order. In other words, he was a part of Rome’s great police force. He was an officer of the Italian band, which was a band made up of soldiers from Rome, entirely outside the influence of Judaism.
- II. CORNELIUS WAS A DEVOUT MAN. In Acts 10:2a, the word “devout” would mean “sincere,” “hardworking,” “honest.” (Spend some time on these attributes, teaching the class the importance of working hard, being honest, being sincere. He was just a good solid fellow.)
- III. CORNELIUS WAS A MAN THAT FEARED GOD. Acts 10:2b, “...one that feared God....” This means three things:
 1. He was monotheistic. That means he believed in only one God. The Jews were about the only people in those days that believed thusly. Most other religions embraced many gods.
 2. He had reverence for God.
 3. He had respect for God’s power and realized that there was a God. Even though he did not know the true God through Jesus Christ, at least he did have a respect for divine authority and was a sincere man in his unbelief. He was not saved, but this was simply because he did not understand about God’s Christ yet.
- IV. THE HOUSEHOLD OF CORNELIUS WAS ALSO DEVOUT. Acts 10:2c, “...with all his house....” Cornelius’ family was devout. In other words, he had taught them right and wrong. He had taught his children to be honest and sincere. He had led his family to be upright, the right kind of people. Though they were not saved either, they were God-fearing people and the kind to whom God is bound to bring the Gospel sooner or later. (Spend some time here dwelling on the importance of influencing our household to do right, to be just, to be sincere, to be hard-working, honest, etc.)
- V. CORNELIUS GAVE ALMS TO THE POOR. Acts 10:2d, “...which gave much alms to the people....” He was ready to give to the poor and to support religious causes. He was liberal and generous. (Spend some time on tithing here, also the importance of our helping the poor and the needy and giving our money to good causes.)
- VI. CORNELIUS PRAYED ALWAYS. Acts 10:2e, “...and prayed to God always.” This would mean two things:
 1. He stayed in the spirit of prayer. Of course, he could not really pray to God through Jesus as we do because he did not know the story of salvation, but he did the best he could. He knew there must be a Supreme Being somewhere, and he tried to make contact with Him.
 2. He had regular seasons of ritualistic prayer three times a day. This is the case in so many religions.
- VII. CORNELIUS HAD RESPONDED TO ALL THE LIGHT HE HAD. Notice Acts 10:4. People oftentimes ask about the heathen who have never heard the Gospel, wondering what will happen to them. This is an example. Cornelius did not know the Gospel, but he did know there must be a God. He believed in what he knew, and what revelation he had, he accepted. Because of this, God gave him more light. The Bible says in John 1:9 that Jesus is “...the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Every man has a conscience, and every man knows there must be a Supreme Being; at

least he has something within him that would make him know. If he responds to this knowledge, then God will give him more light and finally reveal to him the truth. If he does not respond to this knowledge, then God will not give him more light. Notice Acts 10:35, where it says, "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." What this means is that in a heathen nation, if people who do not realize the Gospel of Christ, will respond to what light they do have, God will accept that and give them more light until they understand. Paul draws attention to that in the Roman epistle when he charges the Gentiles with this sin: that they held the truth in unrighteousness. That is, they had not obeyed the light they had, for in creation itself they should have seen God and Divinity and the wisdom of God. Instead of following that light and worshipping God, they worshipped the creature more than the Creator and made of themselves images and worshipped these. Consequently, God did not give them added light so they might know the truth and be saved.

- VIII. CORNELIUS INFLUENCED HIS WORKERS FOR GOD. See Acts 10:7. You will notice that his employees, fellow servants, and workers were righteous people. They were honest people. The sad truth is, oftentimes unconverted people have more character than Christian people do, and this causes a bad testimony with the world. We ought to teach our boys and girls to be honest, to be fair, to be sincere, to be cordial, to be kind, to be hard-working, and to be good people in general and even influence their fellow workers. (Teach a while here concerning the relationship they will have on a job. Will they work hard? Will they get along with fellow employees? Will they be congenial? Are they easy to work with and work for? These things should be stressed.)
- IX. CORNELIUS HAD RESPECT AND HUMILITY TOWARD OTHERS. Read Acts 10:25, 26. You will notice that he bowed before Peter. Peter was not pleased with this and asked him to get up because he also was just a man.
- X. CORNELIUS WAS SAVED, AND HE INFLUENCED OTHERS TO BE SAVED. Acts 10:45-48. Though we have mentioned many good things about Cornelius, he wasn't saved; but because he acted upon the light that he had, God brought him in contact with one who would give him the truth. He then received the truth and believed. Immediately he was baptized, and others were influenced by him.

MEMORY VERSE: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," John 1:9.